

A HISTORY OF U.S. NAVAL MINES IN VIETNAM

Hiaphong: My last chapter

by LT **Joe Hernandez**, USN Ret.

In the Dashpot (issue 30) LCDR **Don DeCrona**, USN Ret. asked the question "Can you remember where you were on 9 May 1972 when we mined North Vietnam?" Yes, I was the Mines officer at MOMAG Charleston, SC. where our main mission was to support and man Lant / Eur mine sites COMINEWARFARE.

The CO, CDR **L. M. Stryker**, USN, Ret. wrote in our history book that "During this tour Minemen, under his command were embarked on Seventh Fleet aircraft carriers where they did final preparation of the mines laid in Hiaphong in May 1972 under the orders of President **Nixon**' The thirty six Mk 52 mines planted from the USS Coral Sea were final pre-pared by MN2 **Gill**, MN3 **Pusher**, MN3 **Buns** and MNSN **Mercier**. Two carriers suffered deplorable incidents in the south China sea. MOMAG Minemen were aboard as follows: USS Kitty Hawk, MNI **Yancy**, MN3 **Delozier**, MNSN **Reid** and MNSN **Kennedy**; USS Connestellation, MN2 **Allen**, MN3 **Dufrain**, MNSN **Duboig** and MNSN **Hinton**.

The mines came from NAVMAG Subic. LCDR **R. L. Anderson**, USN, Ret. wrote in the History book that: "in '72 -'73 responsible for mine and destructor assembly used in Haiphong Harbor and Vietnam." Self-destruct mechanisms were installed. No mine sweeping was necessary. defective sterilizer batteries may have been installed. There were serious security problems. Re-seeding the mines began on 17 December 1972 but MNI **David E Yancy**, USN (Deceased) would not be there. In the Autumn of 1972, he came home on emergency leave and found a broken home. He told me at sick bay that he had witnessed race riots on the carrier he was to return to.

Recently, talking with LT **George Russel**, USN Ret., he recalled among other things that Petty officer **Yancy** had been recommended for the warrant officer program by the carrier C.O. MNI **Yancy's** hands may not have touched the mines for Hiaphong but he was there. Half the world away from home, he did his duty. He should be recognized and remembered for his role in our history. He lived up to the MOMAG motto "**ANYTIME ANYWHERE**"